



Establish and Support Special Transportation Services Coordination

ACTIVITY PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

A goal of the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County must be that basic mobility options for residents of our community are made available to ensure everyday activities are feasible for those that are often constrained by their level of access to transportation services. This is especially important for the disabled and elderly living in our community but are often at a disadvantage because they are not able to drive, cannot afford to drive, or choose not to drive for safety reasons.

Special transportation service is generally the use of public or private buses, vans, and taxis to provide specialized services for people who are unable to access or use regular transit or use private transportation due to a disability, medical condition, or income constraint that limits mobility. With an anticipated dramatic increase in the elderly population in Lancaster County over the next several decades, demand for special transportation services will only increase over time.



There are currently numerous programs in the city and county that provide special transportation services, but coordination of these services is not a reality in most cases. It is believed that with coordination efforts, special transportation services can be provided more effectively and efficiently, with as much as a 25% cost savings. With this potential 25% savings from a more efficient system, additional special transit service could be provided to the community, or the cost to provide the current level of service could be lowered for providers of the service. Also, informative reviews of existing special transportation services, and an understanding of the options available to improve those services will provide opportunities to increase the level of

service currently provided in the community.

Given the importance of access to transportation options for those most in need of services, the Multi-Modal Transportation Task Force recommends that the potential benefits of a coordination effort for special transportation services in the greater Lincoln area should be emphasized and promoted, and monetary support should be provided to ensure completion of a three year pilot coordination program. In addition, a review of StarTran's HandiVan program should be completed so that information is gathered that will help the City of Lincoln provide the best possible ADA required special transportation services. Finally, the Task Force recommends the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County actively review and participate in the Nebraska Department of Road's statewide study of rural special transportation services that will be conducted over a 12-month period beginning in 2004. Information gathered from this study can be used in Lancaster County and Lincoln to better provide and plan for rural special transportation services and needs.

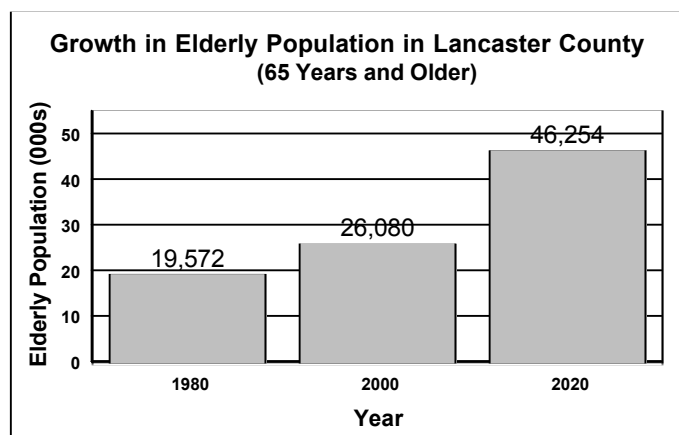
Accomplishing such tasks involves providing information from past studies that indicate the benefits of a coordination effort, and providing support for a current effort to establish and continue a pilot coordination program in Lincoln/Lancaster County for special transportation services. One key component of this pilot program will be to document cost savings with the intention to entice additional providers to participate in the coordination program in the future. Also, these tasks require staff to actively review current programs and service options, as well as to participate in the statewide review of rural special transportation services.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

The Need for Special Transportation Services is Growing

The size of the elderly population in Lincoln/Lancaster County has been steadily rising with advances in medical technology.

With the aging of the Baby Boomer generation, the elderly population will continue to grow in size. Current projections indicate that the elderly population (those 65 years of age and older) in Lincoln/Lancaster County will increase by 77% between 2000 and 2020. Such growth will result in an increase in this population by more than 20,000 individuals, from 26,080 in 2000, to 46,254 in 2020. This anticipated rate of growth for the elderly is more than double the rate of population growth projected for Lancaster County as a whole over this same time period (35% projected overall growth).





A related segment of the population is the disabled population. In 2000, 14.6% of Lancaster County's population age 5 years and over, or 33,485 people, were considered to have a disability of some kind as defined by the United States Census Bureau. Those individuals that comprise the elderly population had the highest occurrence of disabilities with nearly 38% of the those 65 years of age and over living with a disability.

The average age at which elderly drivers quit driving is about age 85 according to the National Institute on Aging. Today there are about 7 million Americans 85 and older, a number that will increase to 9 million by 2030, when the oldest of today's baby boomers hit their mid-80s, and will more than double to 19 million by 2050. Also, the United States Department of Transportation estimates that 800,000 elderly people quit driving in the United States each year, while millions more limit the time of day, the type of roads or the distance they drive.

The existing disabled and elderly population, combined with the expected increase in the elderly population and the related increase in the disabled population, will bring with it increases in the demand for services to handle growing medical and mobility needs. Thus as the size of the elderly and disabled populations increase, the mobility needs of the community will change and an increased demand for specialized transportation services will result.

How to best serve the mobility needs of the elderly and disabled members of the Lincoln/Lancaster community is the focus of this work task to highlight the need for coordinated special transportation services, to endorse and support a pilot program to begin such coordination, to review current HandiVan services, and to participate in a statewide study of rural special transportation services.

Various Providers of Special Transportation Services

When public fixed-route transit service is provided in a community, such as StarTran's regular fixed-route bus service, Federal law requires comparable special transit services be provided to those individuals who are not able to use regular bus service and who qualify for certification under the guidelines established by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Under the requirements of ADA, such specialized service is provided as an option for citizens in need and is not intended to provide transportation service to all disabled people. This service is provided by StarTran through its HandiVan program.

Other providers, such as Madonna Community Medical Transportation and Transport Plus, also play a vital role in providing mobility options to citizens in need of additional specialized services. Such providers, however, are not normally required to follow the ADA provisions that public fixed route providers are required to follow. Most often they supplement the need for medical services transportation. The Lancaster County Rural Transit System (LCRT) provides special transportation services in rural Lancaster County. There are approximately 40 private and semi-private providers of special transportation services in Lincoln/Lancaster County.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Its Role in Shaping Special Transportation Services

While a series of federal legislative rules and mandates were enacted over the years establishing the foundation for what special transportation services was to entail, it was the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 that solidified what currently is required from fixed-route transit providers. In particular, the ADA provides the specific guidelines StarTran, as a fixed-route transit provider, must follow when it provides its comparable complementary special transportation HandiVan service.

Legislative Overview

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) provides a comprehensive framework and approach for ending discrimination against persons with disabilities. The stated national goals of the ADA include assuring that persons with disabilities have equality of opportunity, a chance to fully participate in society, are able to live independently, and can be economically self-sufficient. The ADA is comprised of five Titles, as summarized below:

Title I prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities in all aspects of employment, including hiring, advancement, discharge, employee compensation, and job training. Employers with 25 or more employees had to comply with this title by 7/26/92.

Title II prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in all services, programs, or activities provided by public entities or by private entities under contract to public entities. A substantial part of Title II addresses transportation provided by public entities, delineating specific actions required by public transit agencies, commuter rail authorities and AMTRAK to avoid discrimination including:

1. All newly purchased or leased vehicles or remanufactured vehicles used in fixed route service must be accessible.
2. Public entities which provide fixed route transit service must also offer comparable paratransit service to individuals with disabilities who are unable to use the fixed route transit system. Entities had to submit "complementary paratransit plans" by 1/26/92.
3. All new facilities and alterations to transit facilities must be accessible.

Title III provides for the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, and advantages of any privately owned "place of public accommodation" by persons with disabilities (providing for access to hotels, restaurants, theaters, stores, professional offices, schools, museums, terminals, depots and other privately owned places used by the general public).

Title IV requires that the nation's telephone companies are required to begin offering telecommunications relay service for individuals with hearing or speech impairments.



This requirement was to be met by 7/26/93.

Title V is comprised of several administrative and miscellaneous provisions. Specifically, with regard to Title II, the requirements which address public transportation are intended to establish equality of the regular fixed route transit services and the paratransit services provided for persons with disabilities. As such, the law emphasizes the provision of nondiscriminatory access to fixed route transit services, with complementary paratransit available as a "safety net" for persons unable to use the fixed route transit services. The ADA does not attempt to meet all the transportation needs of persons with disabilities. Instead, the ADA is "intended simply to provide to individuals with disabilities the same mass transportation service opportunities everyone else gets, whether they be good, bad, or mediocre."

ADA's Impact on StarTran

The ADA required StarTran to develop a Complementary Paratransit Plan to fulfill a portion of the Title II requirements by indicating how and when the federal complementary paratransit service requirements would be met by the City of Lincoln. The Plan, while fulfilling the federal requirements, also served as a comprehensive overview and plan for Lincoln's provision of special transportation services for persons unable to utilize Lincoln's StarTran fixed route transportation services. In reality, StarTran had already been providing major aspects of a comparable complementary paratransit program prior to the passage of ADA and therefore mostly needed only to formalize the process through the Complementary Paratransit Plan. The following items were addressed by this Plan:

1. Description of the StarTran fixed route system and paratransit services.
2. Description of proposed StarTran complementary paratransit service which complies with the ADA requirements.
3. Description of proposed eligibility determination procedures.
4. Description of StarTran operator training procedures, and StarTran fixed route maintenance, lift/securement, and other service requirements.
5. Description of public participation process and efforts to coordinate special transportation/paratransit programs within the StarTran service area.

Per ADA requirements, StarTran submitted its Complementary Paratransit Plan to the Federal Transit Administration prior to January 26, 1992, and was determined to be in compliance with ADA by January 1993, having implemented all elements of the Complementary Paratransit Plan. StarTran was one of the first transit systems nationwide to be in full compliance with ADA requirements. The complete Complementary Paratransit Plan is available for review at the StarTran office.

Current Special Transportation Programs

The City of Lincoln, through StarTran, provides the only fixed route transit system in Lincoln and Lancaster County, Nebraska. As such, StarTran is the only agency which, per ADA, "must provide paratransit or other special service to individuals with disabilities that is comparable to the level of service provided to individuals without disabilities who use the fixed route system."

HandiVan Program

The StarTran HandiVan program is a demand-responsive, accessible paratransit "door-to-door" service utilized on a reservation basis by persons with disabilities who cannot use the StarTran regular fixed route transit service. The HandiVan service is both administered and operated by StarTran. An agreement is maintained with the League of Human Dignity, Inc. to provide certain services in support of the City-funded special transportation programs including:

- ◆ Registration of eligible applicants for StarTran reduced fare programs including Senior Saver and Go-For-Less;
- ◆ Registration of eligible applicants for StarTran HandiVan and Brokerage Programs;
- ◆ Function as a source of current information to consumers, the general public, the City of Lincoln and other organizations on matters relating to City-funded special transportation programs, including referrals to other appropriate transportation providers.
- ◆ Receive consumer complaints regarding City-funded transportation programs, including the receipt and forwarding to StarTran and follow-up (as needed) of such complaints.

The HandiVan fleet is comprised of nine lift- and radio-equipped vehicles. Service is provided six days and five evenings per week. Hours of operation include service each weekday between 5:15 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., and Saturdays between 5:15 a.m. and 7:10 p.m. No HandiVan service is offered on Saturday evenings or on Sundays. By providing evening week-day service when regular StarTran fixed-route service does not operate, StarTran effectively provides special transportation service above and beyond the requirements of the ADA.

Approximately 30,000 passenger trips per year are made using this service at an annual operating cost of \$1,041,595, or \$35.04 per trip. The user cost for this service is \$2.00 per trip, and a \$60.00 monthly passport is available. These numbers are drawn from Fiscal Year 2002-2003 statistics.

Users must be ADA qualified to use this service, and they must be registered with the League of Human Dignity. Currently there are approximately 1,390 qualified and registered users of the HandiVan program. Those that wish to use the program must make a reservation request one to seven days in advance of the date and time requested for pick-up.

StarTran does not decline this service to any person who qualifies as a disabled person per ADA regulations and who is registered as such. Through this program StarTran provides special transit service to the Lincoln community that is above and beyond what is required by the

ADA. One reason for this higher level of service is that the HandiVan service is available during the weekday evening hours when the fixed-route service is not in operation. Under ADA, special transportation service must be provided only when regular fixed-route service is in operation. A second reason is that StarTran provides the HandiVan service throughout the entire incorporated limits of Lincoln. Per ADA, special transportation service is required only within 3/4 of a mile on each side of a fixed bus route.

Brokerage Program

The StarTran Brokerage Program began on October 1, 1982, through a contract with a local taxi company. The purpose of the program is to provide supplemental special transportation service to persons served by the StarTran HandiVan Program when the demand for service exceeds the capacity of available HandiVan vehicles. This service, like the HandiVan program, is a "door-to-door" service by reservation only. This service operates on the same days and hours of the HandiVan program. The fare structure is the same as the HandiVan program as well. During FY 2002-2003, approximately 18,300 trips were made using the Brokerage Program at an annual operating cost of \$226,682, or \$12.38 per trip.

The concept of having StarTran dispatchers refer service requests to the taxi company when the HandiVans were full was raised early in the development of a Taxi Demonstration Project. At the August 16, 1982, meeting of the Special Transportation Programs Advisory Board, approval was given for funding the Brokerage Program for an amount of \$3,750 for a six month period (October 1, 1982 to April 1, 1983), basing the funding amount on the estimated service level of ten trips per day. This level of funding was extended to the Brokerage Program for the remainder of that year and has been continued in subsequent years.

The brokerage program, through contractual agreements between the City of Lincoln and Servant Cabs and Transport Plus, affords the StarTran HandiVan dispatcher the option to "broker" persons requesting HandiVan service to these private providers, with the HandiVan dispatcher contacting the dispatchers for these companies. This enables a significant number of service requests to be accommodated that otherwise would be delayed once the HandiVan capacity is reached, particularly during the HandiVan peak load times. The patron pays the private provider the base per trip fare or may utilize a Passport at the same cost as the HandiVan service.

Accessible Regular Transit Service

While accessible buses on fixed-route bus lines are not considered a special transportation service, providing accessible buses does allow many disabled users the opportunity to use the fixed-route system. All 56 StarTran transit coaches are accessible equipped with wheelchair lifts, 20 of which are state of the art "low-floor" buses. All regular bus service is therefore accessible and operates from 5:15



a.m. to 7:10 p.m. Monday through Saturday. There also is a reduced fare program in place for elderly users and persons with disabilities with the fare price set at \$0.50 per trip. In FY 2002-2003, approximately 3,000 trips were made by persons using the accessibility equipment.

Private and Semi-Private Special Transportation Agencies

There are approximately 40 other private and semi-private agencies within Lincoln and Lancaster County currently providing special transportation services at a cost of \$10 to \$20 per trip. Madonna Community Medical Transportation is the largest single provider of special transportation service in this group. Madonna provides approximately 30,000 trips per year with a fare of \$10 to \$15 per trip, depending on distance. These trips are medical related and are run on a door-to-door reservation basis. Transport Plus is a private provider that serves only persons with disabilities at a fare of \$10 per trip. Approximately 100 vehicles are in use by other human service agencies, with many of the vehicles being handicap accessible. Generally, these transportation services are available only to clients of the provider agencies, and/or are restricted to specific trip purposes. These providers operate independently with no formal coordination program in place. A listing of these providers is below:

♦ Association of Retarded Citizens	♦ Lancaster County Rural Transit (LCRT)
♦ Bryan Memorial Hospital – 55Plus Program	♦ Lancaster Office of Mental Retardation
♦ Clyde Malone Community Center	♦ Lincoln Area Agency on Aging
♦ Cornhusker Place – Detox Center	♦ Lincoln/Lancaster Drug Projects, Inc.
♦ Eastmont Towers	♦ Lincoln Parks and Recreation
♦ Family Service Open Door Resource Center	♦ Lincoln Public Schools Special Education
♦ Gateway Manor Retirement Apartments	♦ Lincoln Regional Center
♦ Gramercy Hill Retirement Home	♦ Madonna Adult Daycare Services
♦ Haven Manor North	♦ Maplewood Care Center
♦ Holmes Lake Manor	♦ Milder Manor
♦ Home Service for Independent Living	♦ Nebraska Department of Education Division of Rehabilitation Services
♦ Homestead Health Care Center	♦ Nebraska Department of Social Services – Adult Protective Service
♦ Lincoln General Hospital	♦ Orchard Park
♦ Independence Center	♦ St. Elizabeth Community Health Center
♦ Mental Health Services	♦ St. Monica's Home
♦ Radiation Oncology	♦ Tabitha, Inc.
♦ Indian Center, Inc./Multi-Cultural Awareness Center	♦ The Salvation Army
♦ Lakeview Rest Home	♦ Veterans Administration Medical Center
♦ Lancaster County Community Mental Health Center	♦ Village Manor Living Center
♦ Lancaster Manor	♦ YWCA

The Need for Coordination of Programs

A major issue facing Lincoln/Lancaster County is that there is no formal coordinated registration, scheduling, dispatching, or other service provision program in place among the various special transportation service providers. It has been widely suggested that these providers implement such a coordination effort. Numerous studies and reports, including the 1990 Carter Goble Associates report named the "Coordinated Elderly and Handicapped Transportation Services Study and Plan for Lincoln, Nebraska," and the more recent "Community Services Implementation Plan" developed in 2002 by the C-SIP Transportation Coalition, have been



developed describing the range of transportation services offered by local agencies, the fact that there is a demand for this type of service, and the fact that these are much needed services. A major finding of these reports is that there is a need to coordinate these services in order to better serve the Lincoln/Lancaster community. The Multi-Modal Transportation Task Force concurs with these findings that a coordination program is needed.

In recognition of the need to coordinate special transportation services, funding for a pilot program is currently being requested through the League of Human Dignity which is acting as the lead agency for a coordination effort. The goal of the pilot program is to implement a coordinated special transportation program through a public-private partnership comprised of 4-6 current transportation providers using a Transportation Coordinator who would be hired to implement the pilot program. Such a pilot program would be initiated with a phased implementation over a three-year period, as follows:

Year 1: Achieve Level "C" Coordination:

- ◆ Secure pilot participating transportation providers
- ◆ Ascertain formal commitments
- ◆ Develop initial cooperative programs among participants, to include:
 - ◆ Information and referral
 - ◆ Driver pre-employment screening
 - ◆ Driver training programs
 - ◆ Accident investigation program
 - ◆ Coordination of bulk purchases
 - ◆ Potential coordinated escort service
 - ◆ Potential insurance purchase pool
 - ◆ Standardized/centralized maintenance
 - ◆ Centralized vehicle storage
- ◆ Evaluate resultant savings and/or additional special services trips provided in order to initiate Level "B" Coordination.

Year 2: Achieve Level "B" Coordination:

- ◆ Initiate vehicle and ride sharing (Scenario "B")
- ◆ Market/promotion programs
- ◆ Document successes/evaluate resultant services and/or additional special services trips provided in order to initiate Level "A" Coordination

Year 3: Achieve Level "A" Coordination:

- ◆ Implement central reservation/dispatch among pilot participants (Scenario "A")
- ◆ Pursue/secure additional providers to participate in and expand the program
- ◆ Pursue/secure long-term funding of program
- ◆ Evaluate resultant savings and/or additional special services trips provided

The cost of the 3 year pilot program is estimated to be \$275,000 with much of this cost covered through grant funding. The City of Lincoln, through its StarTran operations, is planning to participate in this effort by providing in-kind office space and technical assistance/supervision for

the Transportation Coordinator (estimated total value of \$39,229). The necessary funding for the first year of this pilot program is nearly secured. However, years two and three of the pilot program are not yet funded and need additional public and private funding support to ensure the full pilot program is completed.

In general, with continued expansion, assessment, and tweaking of the pilot coordination program, it is anticipated that special transportation services in Lincoln/Lancaster will become more available to more people in need for less cost. With actualized cost savings, additional providers of special transportation services will be inclined to join an expanded pilot program and will become participants. It is anticipated that the StarTran HandiVan program would eventually be integrated into the coordination effort so long as the program is self-sufficient and is able to meet the requirements of ADA.

Operations Audit of the StarTran Special Services HandiVan Program

Related to the need for coordination of services is the need to assess the scheduling and management of the special services provided by the HandiVan program through the City of Lincoln. The audit would examine the detailed operations of special services including certification of eligible users, reservation taking, scheduling, and the effective use of contract providers. The audit would be summarized in a final report.

Such audits typically are conducted by an outside expert in special services. The outside expert must be knowledgeable about management practices and procedures and about available computer software that can support them.

Many transit systems have conducted audits in response to recent and rapid growth in special service ridership and cost. Since these services must be provided to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), there is great pressure to insure that the service meets the requirements, and at the same time are provided efficiently. This is particularly important since special services usually cost significantly more in terms of operating cost per passenger than do conventional, fixed-route bus services.

The special services audit would consist of two tasks: conduct an on-site audit and prepare audit report.

1. **Conduct On-Site Audit** - In this task, the special services expert would examine the detailed operations of special services including the following activities:
 - ◆ Certification of Eligible Users. The policies and procedures should insure that only ADA-eligible users are certified. Non-ADA users should only be certified if they meet written criteria that are specified by the City. There should be policies and procedures for recertification of users periodically.



- ◆ **Reservation Taking.** The procedures should meet the certified ADA requirements regarding day before reservations and non-discrimination regarding trip purpose. These requirements only should be relaxed (e.g., same day reservations) if they meet written criteria that are specified by the City.
 - ◆ **Scheduling.** The procedures used should reflect the level of demand being scheduled, the software available in the industry, and the cost effectiveness of the software.
 - ◆ **Use of Contract Providers.** The policies and procedures should insure that contract providers are used in situations that are more efficient than using in-house, StarTran resources.
2. **Prepare Review Report.** A final report of the audit should summarize the results of the audit and identify improvements that can be made within available resources. For each recommended improvement, the estimated benefits, costs, and cost savings will be estimated. Additional recommendations should be provided under the scenario that additional funding is made available to StarTran for its HandiVan services.

Review of Rural Special Transportation Services

An important aspect of special transportation services is the level of service provided in rural areas that are not normally served by fixed-route transit and therefore do not have access to ADA required complementary services. In rural Lancaster County, and in most rural areas throughout Nebraska, fixed-route services are not available and therefore there is no requirement to provide complementary special transportation services. Thus the level of special transportation service available to rural residents is a concern both in Lancaster County and across the state.

One major provider of rural services in Lancaster County is the Lancaster County Rural Transit System (LCRT). The Lancaster County Board of Commissioners, in cooperation with the Lincoln Area Agency on Aging, provides van transportation for all persons residing in rural Lancaster County and other participating communities. The service is wheelchair accessible and transportation consists of early morning pick-ups and mid-afternoon returns. Cash or a 10-ride ticket can be used. The service is provided Monday through Thursday and the cost to the user is \$1.50 each way. Each of the four days service is provided per week serves a different section of the county. On Mondays and Wednesdays, a north route is served, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays a south route is served. Anyone living in rural Lancaster County, Cortland, Ceresco, Adams, or Greenwood can use the service as long as the reservation is made at least one full day in advance to reserve a ride. An application form can be filled out over the phone, or a form can be mailed out to the user and sent back in for reservations. If additional in town transportation is needed it may be requested when an appointment is made. The cost for a mid-day in town transfer is \$2.00.

Such rural services, or the lack of such services in many areas, will be studied as part of a statewide review of rural transit needs by the Nebraska Department of Roads beginning in

2004. The purpose of the study is to determine both short and long term transit needs including, but not limited to quantity and locations of services, funding levels, intelligent transportation system (ITS) capabilities, facilities, vehicles, dispatch systems, and related equipment. The study will ensure that the state's rural transit needs are accurately and properly identified, and that area transit stakeholders have "buy in" to decisions made as a consequence of the needs assessment. Included in the study will be data collection on socioeconomic and funding trends, demand estimations for rural services (both short and long term), and a statewide rural transit survey that will identify among other items funding sources and the willingness to allocate additional funds for rural services.

This statewide needs assessment will involve Lincoln and Lancaster County through a review of the county's rural transportation provider, the Lancaster County Rural Transit (LCRT) System, and a review of the rural needs, both met and unmet, within the county. As such, it is imperative that the state process be met locally with interest and cooperation as information is gathered, as the assessment is made, and as decisions are made. It is likely that new system priorities, funding needs and funding provisions will be identified as part of this process and Lancaster County should be an active participant to ensure the needs of rural residents are best served.

ACTIVITY TIME LINE AND RESPONSIBILITY

There are three distinct tasks involved in this activity to support special transportation services coordination and review the effectiveness of both urban and rural special transportation programs.

Support Special Transportation Services Coordination Pilot Program

The attempt to establish a pilot program for the coordination of special transportation services is ongoing. Numerous grant applications have been submitted and those applications are currently being reviewed. However, it is not certain that adequate funding is available to follow through with the pilot program for the entire three year period.

The Transportation Coordination Work Group has taken the lead in developing these applications for grant funding. This Work Group evolved from three facilitated community discussions on transportation coordination. Members of this collaborative work group include: Wende Baker, Director of the Community Health Partners Foundation; DeAnn Hughes, C-SIP Project Manager; Mike Schafer, Director of The League of Human Dignity; and, Larry Worth, Transit Manager, and Brian Praeuner, Planner, with StarTran. The Work Group will continue to oversee the project

The Multi Modal Transportation Study endorses efforts to implement such a program. Efforts by the Transportation Coordination Work Group to gain adequate funding should continue. StarTran staff should be active partners in this process, and City-County Planning Department staff should monitor the development and results of this pilot program effort. If funding is



needed to continue the pilot program into years two and three, the City of Lincoln should provide funding assistance to ensure completion of the pilot program.

Should the pilot program, once under way, indicate that savings can be realized through coordination of services, efforts should be made to expand the program with additional special transportation service providers. Participation in the coordination program by the StarTran HandiVan program will be considered with an expanded program.

It is assumed that the 3-year pilot program will occur during Phase I of the Multi-Modal Study Plan, and expansion of the coordination program (assuming cost savings of up to 25% are realized through the pilot program) would occur late in Phase I and would continue into Phase II of the Multi-Modal Transportation Plan's implementation time frame.

Conduct Operations Audit of the StarTran Special Services HandiVan Program

The special services operations audit of StarTran's HandiVan program should be completed within two years of the submission of the final report of the Multi-Modal Transportation Study to the Mayor. Subsequent audits should be conducted as travel and financial conditions change. However, good transit practice dictates that the audits should be conducted at least every five years. Also, with a coordination of special transportation services effort ongoing, the participation of the HandiVan program in the coordination effort should be considered in this audit.

The audit should be managed by the City of Lincoln Public Works and Utilities Department and should involve the StarTran managers responsible for special services. Input also should be solicited from elected officials, the StarTran Advisory Board, representatives from the community served by the special services, and citizens at large.

The study should be undertaken using an outside expert in special services to perform the technical work. Existing City staff should manage the contractor.

Review of Rural Special Transportation Services

The statewide review of rural special transportation services by the Nebraska Department of Roads is scheduled to begin in 2004 and is planned as a 12 month process. As a state sponsored effort, city and county staff will not be needed to manage or provide significant staff time, but timely and important input will be needed to ensure the best interests of the local community are conveyed and served during the process. Given the immediacy of this project, a representative from both Lancaster County and the City of Lincoln should be assigned to follow and participate in the progression of this state review.

The results of the state review may involve adjustments in service requirements as well as changes in funding levels or funding programs. Such changes will need to be well understood and applied locally, and with a simultaneous effort to coordinate special transportation services, any changes and requirements for rural services will need to be taken into consideration.

ACTIVITY RESOURCE NEEDS

Special Transportation Coordination Pilot Program

The City of Lincoln, through its StarTran operations, is planning to participate in the first year of the special transportation coordination pilot program effort by providing in-kind office space and technical assistance/supervision for the Pilot Program Transportation Coordinator. This in-kind provision is estimated to value \$39,229.

To ensure continuation and completion of the three year pilot program, the City of Lincoln should provide funding for years two and three of the pilot program of up to 25% of the total funding need. It is estimated that the total cost of these two years of the pilot program will be \$200,000. A 25% contribution will therefore amount to approximately \$50,000 over two years. The source of this funding will need to be identified as part of the annual budget process for FY 2005 and FY 2006.

Monitoring of the pilot program can be undertaken using existing StarTran and City-County Planning Department staff to see if actual cost savings are realized.

In the event cost savings are realized and an expanded coordination program is initiated with the inclusion of the StarTran HandiVan Program, StarTran staff and equipment would be used for the provision of coordinated special transportation services. This additional commitment of City staff and resources would be provided only if the pilot program indicates cost savings can be realized and expansion of the pilot program is warranted.

HandiVan Program Operations Audit

It is estimated that additional resources in the amount of \$10,000 would be required to procure outside contractor assistance to provide necessary technical expertise to complete this work task. The source of this additional funding will need to be identified in either the FY 2005 or FY 2006 budget process and be included in the Public Works and Utilities annual budget. In addition, existing staff from the Public Works and Utilities Department will be needed to manage and oversee this effort. The involvement of existing StarTran managers involved in HandiVan operations will be needed as well.

Review of Rural Special Transportation Services

As a state sponsored effort, no additional local resources will be needed at this time to complete this project. Existing city and county staff, however, should be identified to participate in the state project as necessary to ensure full local involvement in the process.